





KENRIDGE HALL,

AND

OTHER POEMS,

BY

LEANDER CLARK.



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and W. BOINTON.

DEAR FRIENDS AND GENTLEMEN OF THE "———— CLUB:"

I now for the first time offer you, in print, Poems, a part of which
you have so often seen in manuscript.

Please accept them as a tribute of grateful recollection for past indulgence;
and, moreover, as a token of the mutual and confidential friendship that has
so long existed between us.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

L. CLARK.

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POEMS.



DECEMBER.

HARK how the winter-wind
Moaneth the day declined,
Look where the twilight

Burns lambent and low,
Pilling the light of day,
Ere the last flitting ray
Into the darkness

Shall glimmer and go.
Then stir up the embers,
And light up the chambers;
The night is December's,

The last he must know.
Here by the fireside,
Let not the shadows hide
Thongs of his sandals

All feathered with snow;
For he's a mighty peer,
Give him a royal cheer,

Ere we hear chanticleer
Clamor below.
Bring in the nappy ale,
Toast him a bumper pale,
Frothed with the never-stale,
Lighter than tow,
Till his limbs limber,
That snick in the timber,
For this is December
That bringeth the snow.
Icy and cold was he,
Boisterous and bold was he,
Merry and free
With his friend or his foe.
Shield him from fell arrest,
Here let no stern behest
Break on his revels
Like summons of wo.
Then warm up his jackets,
And tie up his plackets,
Give him his rackets,
And leave him to go ;
For this is December,
Whom we must remember—
Frosty December,
That bringeth the snow.

THE NIGHTMARE.

FROM the vexed slumbers of the night,
What is it that doth appal our sight,
Making thick darkness as a veil,
Lighted with gleam of ghostly mail,
And into the panels of the gloom
Passeth as with some pending doom,
Leaving the visioned realm of thought
Dark and with formless shadows fraught ?

O'ercome with phantasy and fear,
What the soul sees we know not here ;
For at the wicker doors of Sleep,
Her secret sentinel doth sweep
The oblivious veil, and all that pass
Look back as on a darkened glass.

Full one is the hour, 'tis the noon of night ;
The house-dog barks, for it crossed his sight ;
The deathwatch ticks in the wainscot thin,
And in every stroke there's a fearful din,
And I open my eyes to see
A withered ghost
At my bed post,
Standing alone by me—

Standing alone in moonshine pale,
Fixing its eyes on me,
Till my blood is still
As the Lethe rill,
And slumber away doth flee ;
For the ghostly clutch of a skinny hand
Is on my throat, like a deadly band ;
And I see in the marble heavens a blot—
Five dusky shields of Camelot.

The bat, the owl, and the obscene fowl
Crawl over my pillow where hedgehogs prowl.
And haggards that never flee—
The witch of the wold,
From the star-light cold,
Looks in with a smile in her wrinkles old,
And Death at the door I see ;
St. Death at the door,
And nine monsters more,
The leprous calf and the dragon hoar.
That my blood is chilled with fear ;
And I mark the cry
Of the raven nigh,
And the white wolf's howl I hear ;
And crouching amid the ghastly kin
Of St. Lethra's court, a thing of sin,
With hideous crest, I see,

Stirring behind the arras thin,
Drawing the clothes from me—
Drawing the clothes and choking my breath,
Till the arches pall with the pending death.

But on my breast I feel the coil
Of loathly arms, and my pulses toil
Till the mandrake's groan breaks the silence dread,
And lo ! the horrible thing hath fled.

And thus, when the ghost of St. Lethra comes,
Doth slumber my eyelids flee,
And my bed doth shake
Till I am awake,
And open my eyes to see
A withered ghost
At my bed post,
Standing alone by me—
Standing alone in moonshine pale,
Fixing its eyes on me,
Till my blood is still
As the Lethe rill,
And slumber away doth flee.

ELESTA.

FAR below the bleak and stormy
Summits, listening to the shawmy
 Music of the pine,
Sighed the beauteous nymph, Elesta,
For the pangs of love oppressed her,
Stung with hurt of Hern-ap-Ester,
 Herder of the swine ;
Deep within the ancient wood
Of the sylvan sisterhood.

Not a dryad of the beeches,
Through the filmy forest-reaches,
That a tress of summer pleaches,
 But had owned her queen ;
When, alas ! their wayward sister,
Whom the gods had named Elesta,
Died for love of Hern-ap-Ester,
 Herder of the swine ;
Who at noonday walks alone,
Fearing of the thunder-stone.

From his heart did Hern-ap-Ester
Grieve, and sigh, " Alas ! God rest her,

The most sylvan nymph, Elesta—

She that loved me so,

With a love that was immortal,

Deeming not its earthly portal

Was the gate of woe.”

This he said, and gave a groan,

Smitten with the thunder-stone.

SOUHEGAN.

By wild Souhegan's mossy banks,
Where bending osiers wave,
Where April brims the foaming tank,
And hollow sedge and cresses dank
His darkling waters lave :

There Nature in her lap of green
Feeds many a nursling wild ;
Or pensive oft at dewy e'en,
Low lapped in woody dells unseen,
Weeps o'er her drooping child.

There summer wreaths her latest bloom,
There May's first blush is seen,
And clasping vines and budding broom
Make thick the umbrage and the gloom,
Of forest-woven green.

There safe the watchful hern may bide,
These waters to invade,
By yawning gulfs that oft divide
The trailing scarf and mantle wide,
Of hoary hanging shade.

Through dark ravines this beadsman gray—
I've heard his sandals thin—
Like pilgrim that had gone astray,
But treads again his cloistered way
To shrive him of his sin.

Now borne as with a pastoral stride,
From far-off summits seen,
Through verdant swathes his sylvan tide
Waters the elmy meadows wide,
And flocks and fallows lean.

Now thrown upon some purpled steep,
Like hermit poor he leans,
Or gliding on with silent sweep,
Lost in his own reflections deep,
His darkened bosom screens.

'Mid wilds sequestered, green and old,
Through coverts thick and low,
Where deep o'er oozy beds of gold,
Dark mirrored in his glassy mould,
His gelid waters flow.

THE HAUNTED LEA.

Oh ! Helen, Helen, walk not here alone,
Oh ! walk not here alone
 Upon the haunted lea ;
A shroud-like mist beats landward, and a moan
 Comes up from out the sea :

For here at dead of night a deed of shame—
A ruthless deed of shame—
 Was done upon the strand,
And here the gaping clouds a tongue of flame
 Let down upon the land.

And o'er the heath, and hovering in the gloom,
And gliding through the gloom,
 A limb of lurid light
Doth ever thus at certain hours relume
 The watches of the night.

And hear ye not the dip of deadly oars.
Of misty, muffled oars,
 Come slowly up the beach,
Beneath the ghostly veil that hides the shores,
 As far as sight can reach ?

Then, Helen, Helen, walk not here alone,
But let us both be gone ;
 O ! haste, and let us flee ;
A shroud-like mist beats landward, and a groan
 Comes up from out the sea.

RINORDINE.

My love is of the gentle kith
Of Cormac, Prince of Power,
And sweeter is she than the breath
Of brambles in the flower ;

And I am lord of dewy dells,
That blossom for the wine,
And on the hills they call me
By the name of " Rinordine."

One night, with step so wary,
As she closed yon wicket gate,
I said, " Sweet Maud McClary,
Why stayed you hence so late ?

Three tardy hours are tallied
In yonder dial clear,
By irksome moments rallied,
That I've stayed to meet you here :

Till in each holt and hollow,
The small birds all are still,
And cuckoo songs so shallow,
Are silent on the hill."

She said, " Three lords in laces
To-night I did decline,
To walk in lonely places
With my gallant Rinordine ;

And though the late hours linger,
And tardy moments wait
Even at the dial's finger,
Full fleeting is their date ;

And we that blithely wander,
And they that careless lie,
Where darkling rills meander,
Must seize them as they fly ;

For youth to age is wending,
As streams that onward go,
With sparkling waves descending,
To black ravines below.

Then while the midnight slumbers,
And hangs her silver net
Of moonlight o'er the dusky trees,
My dearest love, well met."

Oh ! she is sweeter than the breath
Of blossoms in the vine,
And I am lord of dewy dells ;
They call me " Rinordine."

THE
KNIGHT OF THE GOLDEN GRAIL.

IN autumn when the early rime
Was heavy on the spray,
Child Etherd, with the morning clear,
Came spurring fast o'er bank and brere,
Bedecked in stern array.

His shield was of the fell of beast,
And brass his saddle-bow,
His shining mail all saints would hail,
As he o'er miles did go.

He seemed a knight of courage bold,
Right eager for the fray,
From warlike tilts and tournies fierce,
Forth riding on his way.

But as he sped him swiftly on,
Full sad of heart grew he,
Though a goodly sight on every side
Around his eye did see.

Around his eye on every side
A goodly sight did see,
Which made Sir Knight the fiercer ride
In the green-wood for to be.

What speeds him to the green-wood wild—
What speeds him forth so far?
Or he spies the sheen of the elfin queen,
Or seeks in forest cells, I ween—
The grim St. Solderbar.

He rode him north, he rode him west,
Right west by north rode he,
And he came to a forest dim and dark,
And he came to the green-wood tree;
Cried "Well-a-day, in the woodlands gray,
That I this hour should be."

It was, I ween, a forest dim,
Where howling monsters wait,
And priests and hooded friars grim
In ghostly senates prate.

Child Ethard seeks among this rout,
St. Solderbar the lame,
And at his gate, with many a shout,
He calls upon his name.

Out steps a man in ghostly weeds,
And looks him in the face ;
“ Christ’s Mother and the holy creeds !
Tell me, thou valiant man of deeds,
What brought thee to this place ?”

“ I came to seek an holy man,
Dwelling in this wood ;
If thou art he, here is my can,
Come taste with me the liquor wan
That courseth the red blood.”

“ I am that priest of orders grim,
And minister of grace,
And fill my goblet to the brim,
And pledge thee face to face.”

They tasted once, they tasted twice,
The liquor pale and wan,
“ Now speak,” said he, “ what wouldst of me,
Thou brave and stalwart man ?”

They tasted once, they tasted thrice,
The liquor wan and pale.
“ I came to spell, in secret cell,
Blind Fortune for the grail.”

“ The golden grail, it shall prevail,
A charm shall work thine end ;
O'er rising fumes of incense pale,
This potent rod did never fail
The goodly gift to send.”

Hereat, with grave and solemn mein,
He crossed himself with care,
And casting off his mantle green,
He donned a vest of holy sheen,
And turned into his lair.

The mingled words of muttered spell,
Child Etherd well could hear,
And through the rifted rocks above
The ghastly flames appear,
With foetid smell from out the cell
Of this ungodly seer.

“ Now listen to the words I teach,
Thou bravest among men :
The utmost guise of valors reach,
It lies within thy ken”—
Thus spake again the grisly fiend,
And stood before his den :

“ Behold an iris that hath spanned
The bosom of the lea,

A bow of promise to the land ;
What may it promise thee ?

There frowns a portal at its base,
Whose ward did never fail,
Behind whose brazen bar doth lie
The can that holds the grail.

The golden grail, 'tis Mammon's mail,
And valor's shining fee ;
It doth with Heaven above prevail.
And is of earth a deadly stale,
Yet may be worn by thee.

The foulest dragon of the fen,
Doth guard this postern low,
Which to encounter you must arm,
And fell him at a blow.

And when his scaly sides you've laid,
And stretched him on the field,
Then quickly ply your reeking blade,
And straight yon bar shall yield.

But look, Sir Knight, if by the sands
Thy trusty lance should fail,
The death is thine, and better hands
Must bear away the grail."

“ Spell not, black wizard of the lay,
Go make mine armor strong,
That I may smite in deadly fray
This dragon large and long.

Go solder well this brazen rim,
Make firm this faithful brand,
And I dare braye the fellest foe
Ere foiled of Christian hand.”

They tasted once, they tasted twice,
The liquor wan and pale ;
Then spake again the man of deeds :
“ Now, by St. Mary and the creeds !
This arm shall win the grail.”

He's mounted on his charger fleet,
He speeds o'er hill and dale ;
But still the fiercer that he rides,
Before him flies the grail.

Never a breathing-while he waits,
Lest he the race might lose ;
But still o'er steeples, miles, and meres,
The flying goal pursues,

Till he wore his bridle to the web,
His saddle to the wale,

And on his gaze, like meteor blaze,
The bow began to pale.

“ A curse upon thy lying tongue,
Thou black magician fell,
On my heartstrings thy words were strung,
And from its till the drops were wrung
That framed this cursed spell.”

Thus he gives o'er the bootless chase,
And reins his steed around,
His errant journey to retrace,
And flee this haunted ground.

O'er hill and plain he comes again,
Less eager for the fray,
Like Pollard or Sir Pandermain,
Forth riding on his way.

And as he sped him briskly on,
Right glad of heart grew he,
For a goodly sight on every side
Around his eye did see :

Around Sir Knight, on either side,
Did many a scene survey,
And heard the piping winds that blow
And whistle o'er the lay :

He heard a miller's merry note
Come flying o'er the hill ;
He heard a piper tune his oat
To the roking of a quill :

He heard a cuckoo in the bush,
The redbreast on the spray ;
He heard the distant water-falls,
And wild birds' roundelay.

At length, in thought, Child Etherd fell
At parley with himself :
“ I've heard that hereabout doth dwell
The mightiest wizard of the fell,
The scorner of all pelf ;
'That he whilom, was Fortune's toy,
But hath forsworn his life's alloy,
And liveth by himself.

A man of eld, so bare and beld,
With beard so bleak and hoary,
His days they ran into a span,
While he was blithe and merry.

And now his staff and hairy gown,
His book and parchment hoar,
His maple dish and osier seat,
Complete his humble store.

'Tis said that 'neath a shelving rock,
In place most wild and weird,
To shield him from the tempest's shock,
An humble crib he reared.

Him will I seek," said he, and lo !
While beating up and down
'Mid fallen crags, he met a man,
With staff and russet gown.

All dim and aged was his look,
His cheek was palsied o'er
With hastening years, and on a book
Intent he seemed to pore.

Up spoke Child Etherd, " Art thou he,
The hermit of the wild,
That counts his secret rosary,
From worldly cares exiled ?

Or art thou some unlettered hind,
That 'neath life's feeble ray,
Art striving late to store thy mind,
And learn the better way ?

Why fix on me thy searching eye—
Why stare at me so still ?
I owe thee nor thy youth nor years,
Thou dweller 'neath the hill."

“ Who owes not Wisdom keeps nor debt,
Nor credit save with Folly ;
His years are burdened with regret,
His age with melancholy.”

“ And art thou Wisdom—canst thou show,
Ere yet these limbs shall fail,
What I may dare, what I may do,
To win the golden grail ?

I owe thee youth, I owe thee years,
A debt I'll surely pay,
If thou wilt point me to the prize,
And arm me for the fray.”

“ Go, lay thy costly armor by,
Make loose thy breast of steel,
Nor thus repel, with shield of fell,
The truths that I reveal.”

He quickly doffed his shining mail,
And loosed his ribs of steel,
And thus to hoary Wisdom's eye
Did many a wound reveal.

“ Now listen to the words I teach,”
Began the godly seer,
“ Nor doubt a covert of my speech,
If aught escape thine ear.

Attention is the better part
Of hearing, and the end
Of listening, is what he most gains
That doth the best attend.

If thou wouldst practice Wisdom's rule,
To shoulder well thy pain,
Know, Fortune's whip is Virtue's school,
Nor house thee for the rain.

Make this an end, to keep thy days
From vice and folly free,
So shalt thou prosper, and thy ways
Bring joy to thine and thee :

To thee and thine it shall bring joy,
And happiness to all
Who take but counsel of thy course
Alike, both great and small.

If thou seest not as others see,
Subscribe not to their faith,
Nor square thy speech till it agree
With what thy neighbor saith.

Unlearn the creeds the world hath taught,
In hieroglyphics tame,
And beat with rage the raptured thought
To higher, holier flame.

Think not at others' grace to thrive,
Or couch the deed of sin,
Or with the blood of saints to shrive
The leprous spot within.

In limbec of high thoughts distill
What reason hath in store,
Nor seek a precedent of ill
In books of sacred lore.

Lay not the hand of power upon
A weak, defenceless brother,
Nor let thy daily task be done
By labor of another.

The franchise of his strength and skill,
God's help to him that needs ;
But curses lower on him whose power
Hath chained the heart that bleeds.

Like as the hastening surges sweep,
And fall with tresses hoar,
Along the margin of the deep,
And are beheld no more :

So man, impatient of the prime,
Doth hasten to decay,
And from the beaten shoals of time
His white locks pass away.

That age is weary, bowed, and thin,
This palsied frame doth know ;
This falling chest, and hoary chin,
Doth well life's winter show.

Then give to youth the better task,
Before his years be spent,
For thus to weary age at last
A respite dear is lent.

'Tis this that leads to Wisdom's stair,
Whose steps did never fail,
Which you must do, which you must dare,
To win the golden grail.

The golden grail, 'tis Wisdom's mail,
And Virtue's shining fee ;
It doth with Heaven above prevail,
Yet may be won by thee.

There is a ewe, a star-white ewe,
That o'er the hills doth go,
And from the fell I've heard her bell
Tinkling in the woody dell,
And on the meadows low.

She comes from pastoral hills of peace,
Beyond the headlands pale,
And in her fleece, with rich increase,
She bears the golden grail.

Where tangled thickets fence from heat
Some mole or grassy mound,
Oft sheltered from the noon, I weet,
The creature may be found.

But you must watch, and you must wait,
And draw her to the pale,
That when at last the shearers come,
Her *flock* shall thee avail."

Thus spake the man of many years,
In accents strange and new,
And, leaning on his sylvan staff,
He bade Sir Knight adieu.

Child Etherd turning, wrapt in thought,
Again rode on his way,
Resolved, the truths that Wisdom taught,
To practice day by day.

THE DESERTED MANSION.

FROM these halls have mirth and gladness fled,
And the sorrowing winds are here,
And their sigh is a requiem for the dead—
The dead, are they ever near?
Through the darkness dun
Strange whispers run :
Ælura, Ælura, this heart is thine ;
Ælura, Ælura, in death thou art mine.

The stars of Orion are coldly hung
At the windows broad and high ;
And I hear the songs that the dead have sung
When the night-winds whistle and sigh ;
And they shout and moan,
“ We are here alone !”
But soft ! in that wail comes a sound of fear ;
And the fern-wreaths whisper, “ They are here, they
are here !”

They are here ; but no more shall their dust revive,
And their voice is feeble and shrill ;
Like echoes that moan from their hollow cave,
And their camp by the lonely hill :

Stern is their rest,
Nor hath Wisdom guessed
The secret that veils in eternal gloom
The chambers of death in the earth's dark womb.

Alone to the halls of the silent dead,
As in bygone years, I come ;
And the bleak walls echo my lonely tread,
To the wide air mute and dumb ;
But the rapt soul hears,
As of other years,
A midnight murmur of voices free,
'Mid the wail of the blast, and the night-zephyr's glee.

Oh ! where are the young that have passed away,
And the loved that were here of yore ?
Do they visit again these walls of clay,
And the hearth-stone that's bright no more ?
Through the darkness drear
Comes a footstep near—
Ælura, Ælura, this heart is thine ;
Ælura, Ælura, in death thou art mine.

KENRIDGE HALL.

'TIS now the reapers' festal hour,
The moon looks in at the virgin's bower,
Love's fever has ended with torrid suns,
And the raging beast to the desert runs ;
The green curds thicken in stalk and stem,
The chit peers lush from its scarlet hem,
The fallows are trodden by moor and mead,
And the seasons couched for the golden breed ;
But an augury hangs in the crimsoned leaf,
And a rustle is heard in the raven's brief.

Then bar the doors and the windows three,
And the blinds, lest the ravenous bird should see ;
He scenteth our feast, for I heard him croak
From the nethermost branch of yon ancient oak :
In his shout is the omen that darkness brings,
And the night broods under his sable wings ;
Nay, close the shutters, for I have a fear,
Again lest the clamorous bird should hear ;
For when we have tasted this wine, you must know
Of a thing that befell, three moons ago,
At Kenridge Hall, when all was still,
Save the frequent stroke of a distant mill,

Or the boding screech of the obscene fowl,
Or the ominous croaking of the owl.

In a region wild, by a lonely dell,
Where the moon looks down o'er firth and fell,
By an ancient forest, thick and tall,
On the brink of a cliff, stands Kenridge Hall,
With its windows high and antique tower,
And portals grim that seem to lower
On valley and ford and the distant bay,
O'er dusky tarn and copsewood gray.

The bat was astir, but the night was foul,
And I heard the death-note of the owl,
And the raven's croak and the wolf's low howl
Did to my thoughts portend,
That something stirred 'neath the night's dim cowl
That thitherward did wend.

'Twas past the mid-watch, for the cock had crown,
And I sat late by my own hearth-stone ;
The guests had departed one by one,
And the household long retired ;
The sperm in each niche had cease to burn,
And the lamps long since expired ;

The clock had numbered the hour of one,
The doors were secure, for I sat alone,

And the light from the fire but feebly shone
On the arch of the distant wall,
When the sudden winds, with ghostly moan,
Seemed stirring within the hall.

I heard a sound, but I could not say
From whence it came, and turning that way,
It seemed that the wainscot old and gray
Was parting before my sight,
When the falling embers, with fitful ray,
Cast a vague and sombre light :

And lo ! a visible form was there,
Its bones were fleshless, its bones were bare,
And the skeleton shape did the semblance wear
Of a bard of the olden time ;
But the sound that came from its lips of air
Was not of an earthly chime :

Like the shell that murmurs of the sea,
With a mysterious melody,
It solemnly uttered its voice to me,
Like a voice from the days of yore,
Or the winds that sweep, in their nightly glee,
The reeds of a lonely shore :

It muttered 'gainst Time, who had filched away
Brave histories of a brighter day,

Who had touched with mildew and decay
The fanes of past renown,
While shards of ancient masonry
Their mouldering turrets crown :

'Twas heard with the night-winds rushing through
The countless nooks of the ancient flue,
That groaned as it is wont to do
When the breeze is strong and high,
And I could not catch the accents true
Of the spectre's voiceful sigh :

But before my face the thing did stand,
And I marked, in what was once its hand,
An ancient tome, which my fancy planned—
A book of wondrous lore—
For a ghostly seal, with cloven brand,
Was traced on its margin hoar.

With fixed regard, with solemn stare,
As I sat sealed and motionless there,
It eyed me, and ere I was aware
It proffered the mystic tome,
And disappeared, but I saw not where—
It passed into the gloom.

I arose right eager to inquire
How a thing so strange should thus transpire,

And adding fresh faggots to the fire,
I searched the wainscot high ;
But where it should enter, or thus retire,
No trace could I descry :

But the fire burned bright, and the coast was clear,
And naught that stirred was visible there,
And I smiled that the restless eye of fear
Should conjure a thing so vain,
Or that the startled ear should hear
What fancy thus did feign :

But still through the darkness I fixed an eye,
On a dusky window, deep and high,
For the soul with fearful glance will pry,
And a stillness is at the heart,
When the secrets of the grave are nigh,
And the shadows will not depart.

'Twas now two hours ere the glimpse of day,
And the fire still burned with cheerful ray,
And to summon my thoughts from their idle play,
I returned to the chimney nook,
When lo ! to my surprise there lay
The spirit's wondrous book ;
'Twas lodged in a niche of the chimney old,
And clasped with many a secret fold :

I strove to undo its intricate clasp,
With here a verge, and there a hasp,
And many a slide with golden grasp
In mystic cypher placed ;
When touching by chance a secret spring,
In whose embrace a clasp did cling,
With holy signet traced,
At length the invisible coil gave way,
And the pictured lore of Nature lay
In scintillating lines of light,
Like truth revealed before my sight.

Leaf after leaf I did explore,
And many a page I pondered o'er,
Searching what ne'er was seen before
By mortal eye, for in each nook
Of that strange, mysterious book,
Things long familiar to my dreams
Were shadowed forth with many gleams.

Here rose a dim-discovered dome,
And there a half-remembered home,
A street in back of an old town
That I had sometime sauntered down—
A thoroughfare, a broad high-way
That o'er the gleaming highlands lay,

Where farms and villages were seen,
With orchards, fields, and meadows green,
And scenes and haunts of other days,
Where memory baffled loves to gaze,
And fancy lingers by each nook,
On some familiar sight to look.

Here seemed, with starry compass drawn,
The kindling circuit of the dawn,
Where Tellus' reeky mansions rise,
And Phœbus' fiery acre lies,
Where young Hyperion lifts his head,
Still blushing from his cloudy bed,
And peers abroad with glimpse uncertain,
Ere Morn uplifts her dewy curtain,
Or calls the youngling hours to drink
Around the day-spring's rosy brink.

There, by celestial sluices set,
Orion pours the stormy jet—
The limbec of the sphery dews,
That from the gelid ether brews
The drops of April; the deep passes,
Where beettling crags the clear wave glasses,
And many a mountain flood distils
Its foaming cataracts and rills

In turbid torrents to the deep—
Bear tributes of the rocky steep.

Here crouching demons watch and spy
The zodiac's vaulted mystery,
Or scan beneath the kindling star,
Slow crossing o'er the sultry bar,
The gleam of whose hot scarf would pale
Bright Hesper's robes of glimmering mail.

Here, noiseless as the midges tread,
The Night her wary dragons led,
To guard her consecrated ground,
And dew and darkness breathe around :

There, gilding o'er a wide campaign,
The moon had cast her shining wane ;
The glowing stars, like meteors, gleam
O'er glittering spire and crystal stream ;
The gray rocks glimmer in the light,
And o'er each bald and pallid height
The insect hum of drowsy night

Seemed choiring far and near,
With ceaseless murmur from the ground,
As Hermes' harp of silver sound
Made music to the ear.

Enraptured thus I did explore
Full many a page, and pondered o'er
The picture-thoughts that gleam and go,
Like sunlight on December snow,
Till leaves, dividing, part anew,
And show to my astonished view,
In duplicate of endless years,
A vision of the glassy peers—
Time and Eternity—that bear
The cycle and the shield of air,
And on their moony vizards shone
The brazen type of things unknown ;
Dominicles, upon whose blaze
Apollo's starry minions gaze ;
Strange parallels, and figures stark,
Hemisties vague, and symbols dark,
With magic cycles, planes, and spheres,
And charms that greet the sybil's ears—
Eternal signs, whence Faith may draw
From the prest world the sphinx's paw ;
And turning still I did behold
Full many a line embossed with gold,
Where canticles and cyphers deep,
With secret signs and sigils keep
The word of power, the potent charm,
That shall the dragon-watch disarm,
And break unto the world's increase
The vigil of the golden fleece.

Here, on a margin deep I saw,
In form no earthly hand could draw,
A spectrum of still ages past,
And through its magic vista glassed—
The hieroglyphic could I see
That seals the past eternity ;
And on its fulgid limbs of light
Stood chronicled before my sight,
What man hath seen, what man hath been,
His spring of destiny and sin,
The far perspective of his birth
Ere the glad seal was set in earth,
Or human pulse had pledged with gore
The chalice of the world's deep core.

Again I saw his race sublime
On the utmost verge of time,
Fading from the gulfy bourn,
And the Earth in sadness shorn—
Shorn of all her locks, to lie
In helplessness and vacancy ;
Or to couch in beastly mood,
Nourishing a monstrous brood ;
While the whispering zephyrs lie
On the sea-washed Azores high,
Where the surging billow flakes,
And the frothed Atlantic breaks ;

Up, away, ye doughty elves,
Of the azure slopes and shelves,
Flee like shadows from the west
O'er the green and paly yest ;
Play in Triton's singing shell,
Make his bellied waters swell,
And his seething billows roar
On the surf-repelling shore ;
So the elements that wait
Shall have commerce, and create.

Still, as each dusky leaf I turned,
Spectre-thoughts within me burned,
I beheld the cloud-hung temple
Of our destiny, the trample
Saw I at the mighty door,
Where the prying Fates explore,
And amid the seeming din,
With their beagles enter in ;
O'er each giant, grim pilaster
Of the world's obscured disaster,
I could trace the future's story
In a masonry of glory,
With its friezes jutting o'er
Many a mouldering cove of yore ;
As I gazed upon its portal,
Palisades, and domes immortal,

Through a casement could I see,
Under storied lintels three,
Three several doors that open wide,
By which the wary Sisters glide
Through haunted chambers to o'ersee
The dread commands of Destiny.
In this Fane's once guarded centre,
Where no godly thing did enter,
Where the high courts of Oppression,
War and Rapine, held their session,
I could see the expiring embers
Fade within its haunted chambers,
And each ghost all timely laid
In dim sarcophagus arrayed.
Deep vaulted aisles I could behold,
With panels high, and roof of gold
Studded with stars and crescents bright,
And sown with gems of livid light ;
Thither comes no mortal tread,
In those cloisters long have sped
The glowing shuttle and the wheel
That frame each mesh of mortal weal :
There the Destinies are met,
There in sombre council set
The Sisters of the sacred roll
Quartered with the deathless scroll ;
Some o'er lucky dies are bent,
And some regard with full intent

The progress of each fatal woof
Trailing from the starry roof;
Others with passing moments deal,
And from their withered palms oft reel
The blind-worm's coil of secret ill,
The fatal unction to fulfil.

Here, while deep-breathing Somnus plies
The wicket low where Dream-land lies.
To seek the nightly wizard's hearth,
The soul hath 'scaped her walls of lath,
And from the still, quiescent fold,
She comes by haunted wood and wold,
And with the rapt magician hears
The tumult of the turning spheres.

'There, summoned to the trades of Earth.
The demons gather at a birth,
And in their cup I could descry
The grains of immortality,
With signs of God and Nature blent;
And ere the swaddling scarf is rent,
The signet shadow and the seal
Are on that brow for woe or weal;
But man that springeth from the mould,
In hieroglyphic dust, to hold
Dominion o'er the clod that lies
At last upon his conquered thighs—

Misled by Fortune's meteor-ray,
By devious paths I saw him stray,
Where'er his vague chimeras lead,
With restless eye he turns to heed ;
Hastening, he knows not what he seeks.
But to the hollow darkness speaks ;
The mirage of the morn expands,
And in the glowing light he stands,
With folded arms and knitted brow,
For many years are on him now,
And like the forest king at last,
When chill November drops his mast,
Ere the flying mists of Morn are spent,
He pays to Earth what Earth has lent,
And turns his forehead to the skies.
And with extatic vision dies.

Here, on a mountain's barren side,
A sluggish cloud hangs like a tide.
Fast ebbing to the gulf below,
Whose blasts the blistering mildews sow,
And writhing 'neath whose deadly wave
The poisonous, creeping vipers lave.
From the deep vistas of a glade,
A crowd their upward journey made,
By toilsome ways, the cliffy steep ;
Some measure, and some idly creep

Along its base ; others seem vexed,
Disheartened, and with toil perplexed,
And some with frantic gestures torn,
Toward the yawning gulf were drawn :
Nay, all who reach this barren shoal,
By darkling paths soon miss the goal,
Save one, who, freed from earthly swound,
Alone had scaled that giant mound,
And on its shorn and rocky height
Had tricked a gem of living light,
Gilding the spectre barks that glide
Far o'er the dim lake's dusky tide.

Here, round the pulsings of the north,
Where a staid frost feeds like the moth
O'er Nature's melancholy dream,
The boreal chambers fade and gleam,
Far glimpsing to the baffled sight,
The flitting phantasma of light,
As to the startled eye of thought
Dim spectres of the gloom were raught,
And still did fall, with silent tread,
The livid sandals of the dead.

Here, on the open valley ground,
Where dews and damps the most abound,

Lay stretched a bird of feeble wing,
Scarce tempered to the humid spring,
O'er which, with circling cloud embraced,
This oracle of light was traced :
“ If on the breezy downs you see
A bird perplexed, and thou art free,
Grope not her crest, thou man of heed—
For who hath foiled her wing of speed ?
The finch that bruised her none shall know,
Lest he by touch be stricken so,
And e'en with meddling feel the taint
That makes the crawling reptile faint ;
Seek not the bird of plaited quill,
To follow her by dale and hill ;
A pestilence is in her wing,
The mildew breeds where she doth sing ;
Keen eyes and ears are on thee bent,
From many a copse and thicket leant,
And from the leafy burrows near,
A sound significant ye hear,
To every fowl that wings the air,
The commerce of the fields is there ;
Then come not to the fallow ground,
Nor cast a wistful look around.”

Still scenes untold passed in review
Before my sight, that thrilled anew—

As ghostly clutches fixed my eyes—
My thoughts with sleepless ecstasies.

Here in black league the tempests rise,
And darkly in the lurid skies
Death and returning Chaos rear
The shadowy mace and dusky spear,
And with triumphant hosts prevail
O'er mighty Pan and Neptune pale ;
Where'er their winged coursers sweep
With frozen hoofs the fiery deep,
The fierce, destroying strife was waged,
And the torn elements engaged,
Till the charred vault, black as the sea,
Had passed the dread anatomy,
And darkness as a flood did stay
The silent courses of the day.

There, on the soul's broad Nile afar.
Where frowning headlands seem to bar
The fading light of day,
The star of faith, with silent sheen,
Still glides the towering cliffs between,
To light the dreary way,
Where straits abound, and darkness breeds,
And Thought her groping gender leads,

By many a dank, unholy den,
Where howling monsters of the fen
The deadly marches keep—
Where demons stalk and bipeds stare,
And griffons watch in ready lair
The fell brood of the steep—
And hear the darkling waters hoarse
Wild rushing from their caverned source.

Beneath a coronet of palms,
The blazon of high arts and arms,
Time's holy chapter could I see,
Begirt with mighty heraldry—
Where ensigns and escutcheons lean,
And many a strange device is seen
Of orders grained in mystic scroll,
Or paneled high in dusty roll—
Where glittering or and argent gray,
Grim gules and gabardines display
The panoply of ages lost,
As on a mighty shield embossed,
Whose glowing disk and brazen field
The hoar antiquity revealed ;
Here flashed the symbols of old days,
And there far gleamed the golden haze
Where Time beats onward with lapse
Of the dim ages ; darkness wraps

The future as the past, but here
The sight was spectral, and the seer
As in a glass could all things spy
That 'neath the weft of darkness lie ;
Thereon the signs of Salem shone,
Of Paphos and proud Ilion,
Of Isis and Osiris old,
The death-revealing sigils told ;
There Cupid wandering through the spheres,
From distant walls the watchword hears—
“ *Unah moray, the silent sleep,*”
The challenge of the embattled steep,
The dreary mound, the tented fold,
Where sleep the buried gods of old,
Where sepulchred in silent clay
The wasted brands of Nature lay,
With Time's oblivious shadow blent,
Down sealed in Death's dim cerement ;
Slowly he nears the whited wall,
Fearing lest some curst sentinel,
With call abrupt or cry unblest,
Might suddenly his steps arrest.

For him who hath in precept sinned,
Or in his sleeve false maxims pinned,
Or from a lying text hath raught
A cloak to hide his honest thought,

Or with dissimulating tongue
A seeming truth from falsehood wrung,
For bickering priests, in godly fold,
That raffle for the tank of gold,
While sweet Philosophy doth swink
For simples from the river brink,
Stands many a grim and golden line
Configured in this book divine ;
For at the crib of sordid cits,
They stall their faith, and fire their wits,
Till Reason with a smile surveys
The bended lamp and tortured blaze ;
And thus they turn with sleeveless thought
The page the universe hath raught,
But pass with false, averted ear,
The ever-whispered secret near.
Shall pampered faith of such ere waive
The doubts of stillness and the grave,
Or in his thought shall he illume
The veiled shadow of the tomb ?
The unvexed fathoms of the deep,
Where still the ancient waters keep
Their soundless depths, for him shall stay
The downward beating of the day ;
No star shall blazon with his beam
The secrets of the ocean stream,
Or gild with light the darkling shoal
That tracks the brimmed Atlantic goal.

When to the world's unquiet stir
My blazing hearthstone I prefer,
As the stirred Thought resumes her mace,
I turn this sombre lore to trace ;
Where'er the raptured search may be,
Some talisman of light I see,
The symbol of whose cloven beam
With mystery informs my dream,
But whose still-raught enigma lies
Deep hid from unanointed eyes ;
Herein the charmed keys I hold,
To Nature's consecrated fold ;
The whispered syllable I bear,
That opes to Wisdom's secret stair ;
Step after step I will explore,
And many a clue I'll ponder o'er,
Searching what ne'er was seen before
By mortal eye, for in each nook
Of that strange, mysterious book,
Things long familiar to my dreams
Were shadowed forth with many gleams.

By Cynthia's silent-beaming light,
When lonely Hesper brings the night,
What time the glow-worm lights her cell
Beneath the copses of the dell,
Whene'er I turn with pensive pace,
Or lonely sit in silent place,

This shadowy Scripture will I view,
And life's unfathomed lore pursue,
And in this fearful book advance,
In spite of fortune, death, and chance.

GODONERIL.

YE nymphs of every bower and glade,
Come listen to my rhyme;
I'll sing to you a song was made,
When tuneful notes, by sun and shade,
Bid welcome to the prime.

'Tis of the fair Godoneril,
A maid of high renown,
Who comes by haunted wood and fell
To plait her hair with nymphs that dwell
By dale and eke by down.

Then, gentle maidens, shun the stale,
But listen to my rhyme,
For Love so lithe will waxen hale,
And boldly spring Diana's pale,
When Ver is at the prime.

PART I.

As fades that season of the year
When birds begin to sing,
And infant bells their heads uprear
Upon the lap of Spring;

When mounting up the starry sky,
The Scorpion's crest appears,
And Leo, 'neath the Virgin's eye,
The flaming solstice nears ;

As darkness yields the hour of night,
And shadows dim decline,
And Hesper, lovely queen of light,
Leans on her glimmering shrine,—

Alone I paced the dewy mead,
When all around was still,
Save sounds that from a tuneful reed
Came far o'er dale and hill.

The moon had poised her crescent bright,
And sped her shifting ray,
And through the dark, in misty light,
Shone field and forest gray ;

And gently wafted o'er the scene,
In wood-notes wild and clear,
The night-bird's plaintive song, I ween,
Fell sweetly on my ear.

Show me thy tuneful lodge, said I ;
O sing that promise o'er,
And in thy leafy jail so high
I'll bar me evermore.

But hush ! a sound more soft and shrill
Than this night-singing bird,
The gleamy vast of twilight still
To answering cadence stirred ;

Till far away its chorus clear
Re-echoed through the dell,
And on the Night's sequestered ear
In dying numbers fell.

The Mermaid bright, with harp in hand,
That mariners do hear,
From off her crisp and coral strand,
In sea-notes soft and clear,

Ne'er poured her sad, mellifluous strain,
When sweeter sounds befell,
Than when the night-breeze bore again,
Like bird-notes from the dim campaign,
That burden wild and shrill.

PART II.

In glimmering mail, by park and pale,
Beneath the copse-wood gray,
The glow-worm hangs his shining spark,
That through the posterns of the dark,
Far gleams with lucid ray.

The thick stars lent their livid fire,
The air was mute and still,
The cricket small, with tiny lyre,
He sung full loud and shrill.

Though scarce within those silent bounds
A zephyr's wing was heard,
As, lifted by the viewless winds,
Each leaf and blossom stirred ;

When suddenly on every side
The glow-worm sheaths his ray,
And hark ! that song, it needs must bide
A moment of delay ;

For lo ! a form of fairy mould,
So buxom, lithe, and true,
Came gliding o'er the grassy wold
Among the pearly dew ;

And to a deep, sequestered grove,
Where moonlight glimpses play,
By boughs and twisted vines enwove,
With checkered shadows gray ;

Beneath this wildly-tangled shade
It silently withdrew
Through covert glooms, that scarce betrayed
A glimmer to the view.

Which way I turned was naught that stirred :
Again the coast was clear ;
On either hand a light breeze fanned
The thickets far and near ;

Again that busy, chirping song
Arose from out the brake,
And gleamed the dusky woods along
The glow-worm's shining flake.

PART III.

Sleep doth her lovely forms create,
Of sights that more than seem,
Yet bear with her the fleeting date
Of life, misnamed a dream ;

But in our waking dreams we see,
In fancy's misty light,
The airy forms of reverie
Unseen of others' sight.

Was this, then, but a waking dream,
That to my vision brought
The dim reflex of fancy's gleam
From youth's vague rapture caught ?

Or had I of terrestrial mould
The loveliest form surveyed,
That thither sought the nightly fold
Of yon deep rustling shade?

This thought was as a touch that thrilled
With rapture through my breast,
For now it seemed as chance had willed
Love's watches should be blest.

As thus with eager steps I turned
To trace this vision rare,
A maiden form I soon discerned
Reclining gently there,

Upon a primrose purpled bank,
With clustering harebells lined,
Close sheltered by the hazel dank,
With dewy herbs entwined.

Her limbs like prostrate pillars seem,
Of fairest marble wrought,
And from her breast the moonlight-gleam
A tender radiance caught.

I've seen the morn' a swathing cloud
Of golden tresses tie,
And close her radiant bosom shroud
From Phœbus' staring eye:

Thus o'er her breasts like lilies rare
A snowy scarf she drew,
Whose silken parcels aptly pair
To prison them from view.

Shrink not at my approach, fair maid,
Nor deem me bold, said I,
For Love will seek the cloistered shade,
Where Beauty deigns to lie.

True love, she said, in duplicate
His orders doth reveal,
By sigils of immortal date,
And Honor's burning seal.

Behold, where beams yon trembling star,
With Faith, its shining peer ;
Be Honor's shield the golden bar
To bless their radiance here ;

So shall his legion ne'er be shorn,
But on his banners free
We'll trace a snow-wreath to be borne
In Love's high heraldry.

PART IV.

THE soft air from the scented downs
Each leaf and blossom stirred,
And deep within those silent bounds
Love's whispered vows were heard :

But how those vows forestalled the rite
That waits on fasting time,
The stars beheld with chastened light ;
But who shall tell in rhyme ?

The lark with high-careering wing
On dewy pinions borne,
That makes the rim of darkness ring
To usher in the morn :

Now, through the purpling ether bright,
Her fallows did survey ;
And on each shorn and dusky height,
The golden fleece of day.

Ah ! look, said she, how faintly blinks
The glow-worm through the shades,
And far the drabbed Morning swinks
Along the dewy glades ;

And on the gray hearth of the dawn
The blushing fires decay ;
Adieu, adieu ! you must be gone,
Though Love would bid you stay.

One kiss, said I, before we part,
One glance from those bright eyes,
Where Love purloins his trembling dart
All bosoms to surprise.

One kiss was shared between us twain ;
Dear maidens, one with you,
For sure a kiss can leave no stain,
So it be rendered back again ;
And now, sweet maids, adieu !

TO A METEOR.

FROM off the lap of the marish sea,
Where'er thy poisonous vapors fleet,
A pestilence is borne of thee,
Thou glow-eyed gnome, with murky feet,
That through the darkness dost retreat,
By devious ways, where none may follow,
Nor ever mortal shall thee greet,
Or view thy phosphorescent halo.
Thou marsh-careering elf, some fallow
Or reedy fen is thy abode,
Whence thou dost flee ere Dan Apollo
Has on the sheet-like vapors glowed;
When with thy wicker lamp bestowed,
Into some slimy delve unclean,
The truffled hall of bat or toad,
Dost thou retire; yet oft, I ween,
When Twilight lifts her torch between
Dark-coming night and setting day,
Belated travelers have seen,
Thee, light thy grim and gairish ray
Even at the touch of darkness, say;
And whence art thou born of the night,
To bear a demon's fated light?

BLOMER BROOK.

ERE the drabbed nymphs of the morning glide,
To gather their mists from the mountain's side,
Or drawn from the dayspring's fiery loom
The glowing weft of the parting gloom—
Alone on a grassy slope I lay,
By the rumbling mill-dams, mossed and gray,
That into the vale of Blomer pour
Five torrents down with deafening roar.
As I gazed on the rout of the foamy flocks
That bubble and swim in the swirling docks,
'Mid the noise of waters there rose a chime,
Like the moon-lit bow of a misty clime,
When, under the shadows, there shot a gleam
From the rocky delves of the crystal stream,
And out of the midst of the glowing light
Rose the beauteous nymph of the waters bright.
Upon her bosom the beryl shone,
The broom-sedge tangled her lovely zone,
And her maiden limbs, in their beauty seen,
Were downward draped with a film of green,
Where, close at each ankle, its folds were plied,
Thus modestly, to keep out the tide,

Lest the laughing ripples might glance below,
Or the waves, enamored, cease to flow.

Thus guarded, she stood on the wave-worn rocks,
'Mid the halo that gleamed in the swirling docks ;
And her harp, that was framed of the osier tall,
She lightly touched with her fingers small ;
And soft and shrill, and wild and clear,
Her wood-notes rang through the valleys near.

From the mountain's pap,
And the upland's lap,
Down to the vale of Blomer,
My falls and fords,
With their gathering hordes,
Come in with their voicefull rumor—
That the Souhegannock I soon must wed,
And lie on his cold and pebbly bed.

Though my founts and rills,
With their foamy gills,
May caudle his cup forever,
There's many a nymph,
In as pure a lymph,
Gives ooze to this brawling river ;
Then why must I, in all others' stead,
This old, adulterous Sargus wed ?

There came two bards,
With their busy cards,
And Apollo's fiery spindle,
To work the wool
That the muses pull,
But never a thread did dwindle
To that false fabric that I was to wed,
And lie on his cold and pebbly bed.

But to work mine end
I will now descend ;
Perchance, I may still this rumor,
In the babbling stave
Of his noisy wave,
That sounds through the vale of Blomer :
By telling him clearly, I ne'er can wed,
To lie on his cold and pebbly bed.

So saying, she built her a fairy skiff,
And plaited it well with the alder leaf,
And down through the Blomer vale she goes,
Just as the peep of dawn arose,
Twining the wreaths of her dusky hair
With the dewy bell and primrose rare,
For wide the populous blooms were shed,
Where'er a sauntering keel she sped,

And the pendent drops of the night were closed
In their fallow-cups, as they silently dozed.

You must not doubt but I followed near,
For the wide-spread rumor had reached my ear,
And close at the heel of her skiff I ran,
To hear and to see what was said and done.

As she hastened along by many a bank,
And many a dripping alder dank,
At length she came to the open scene
Of the valley wide, and fresh and green,
Were the flowery banks that she passed between,
And every nook and every turn
Of her crystal tide did she quickly learn ;
When lo ! on the valley's furthest edge,
As 'twere some mutual cup to pledge,
There stood her betrothed upon the shore,
With his water-pouch and his staff of yore ;
But his ancient garb that so oft beguiled
Was but a feint of his fancy wild,
For under the cap of a pilgrim old
Were gathered his youthful locks of gold.
This she discovered with delight,
For she knew to return was beyond her might,
And turning her lovely face to the south,
He printed a kiss upon her mouth,

When into his arms she fell, with a sigh,
Upon his pebbly bed to lie ;
When, hanging aloft his mantle green,
He drew her beneath its verdant screen,
And down on his oozy bed she sank,
'Neath the birch and the dripping alder dank ;
One fond embrace, and the thing was done,
The mutual pledge that made them one.

SONNET.

No. 1.

THE stars keep watch in heaven, as Dian's soul,
Were to her muse attentive ; and the wind,
Steals with a voiceless whisper for the goal
Of cloudy Æolus ; the groves are lined,
Thick with the treasures of phosphoric fire,
Where Philomel sings sweetly ; yet the Night,
With these her panoply, and the Day's pyre,
Is not, my love, as thou art fair and bright ;
Then on thy radiant beauty I must look,
Tho' through the withing of yon woven screen,
The flowery compass of that privy nook
No love profaning eye has ever seen,
To charm my soul with the celestial sight
Of Dian in her dreams, desheveled as the Night.

SONNET.

No. 2.

'Tis the wane of the leafy June, my love,
And you are young and fair ;
Three hours ago it was noon, my love,
And music is in the air ;
But knowest thou not, as the Spring did pass,
That the Summer will be no more,
And that beauty will fade as the feathered grass
When the winds of winter soar.
O then, at the reedy Summer's glee,
Let us find where the pinks and the tulips be,
And the zephyrs alone shall come
When the harebells blossom, but cannot see,
And the thickets are blind and dumb—
Away from the stir of the busy crowd,
Where the turtles are cooing, and the quails pipe
loud.

SONNET.

No. 3.

LONG years have flown since last we met,
And changefull days have passed as one,
And many an eye in darkness set
Must show what conquering hours have done.

Time waits not at his feast, nor friend,
Nor bidden guest, but serves to such
As sit betimes, and makes an end
Of what the greedy moments clutch.

Yet time, and change, and rolling years,
That rule us with resistless sway,
Within our hearts beget no fears,
For the stern thought knows not dismay,
And shrinks not at the closing doom
Of sleep, oblivion, and the tomb.

SONNET.

No. 4.

YE elves of fountains, rivers, meads, and fells,
Dark-clefted caverns, lakes, and mountain-lairs,
Ye whispering, wan magicians of the airs,
Ye imps of terrors and embracing spells,
Ye fools of fancy, priests of prodigies;
Nay, all ye ghosts of darkness and of might,
Who walk in shadow of close-keeping night,
I here your embassies and powers beseech;
In what deep nook, fast hid from mortal eyes,
Ye do the stillness of the hour impeach,
Making Night's gentle visage curst and grim?

* * * * *

SONNET.

No. 5.

As oft as April, in her season, spills
Reviving moisture to the barren ground,
So oft November's icy finger chills
The radiant blossoms that the Summer bound ;
And ever thus the lurking taint is found,
Where'er the Spring her bounty doth bestow,
Some fate unseen with fortune doth compound,
And in our flesh the blind-worm's woof of woe
Muffles the wing of joy, and we sit low
In moody contemplation ; and to cast
This leash of sorrow we must bear the throw
That in our blood shall conquer at the last—
We are clay, moulded from the dust we tread—
The soul a blossom that must soon be shed.

SONNET.

No. 6.

WEAR not the mask of Love upon thy face,
For fear my eye discern ; 'twere better veil
The sweet serenity Love's eye would trace,
Than with its gloze to make his visage stale.
Think'st thou that I thy coldness should bewail ?
'Twere but the change of seasons, cold for heat,
As after Summer comes breme Winter's bale,
Which makes the husbandman his stores complete ;
Then strive not 'gainst the season ; let it beat,
Howe'er inclement ; let the clouds unfold,
And o'er thy passions fall shed tears of sleet,
Like virgin ashes to its vestal mould ;
As on the petals of the primrose lie
The early frosts that make its blossom dry.

VERSES.

'Twas when the Spring, with blushes died,
To youthful Phœbus yields her bloom,
Fresh as a new-made vestal bride,
O'er fain to greet her virgin doom.

When mounts the quick'ning sap thus stirr'd,
And jaybirds scream, and turtles cry,
Some wo-begotten sounds I heard,
Born of the woody boroughs nigh.

Such bitter wail, so fraught with care,
Such sorrow-stricken notes of woe,
Such doleful cadence in the air
Did through the startled valleys go,

As made each cliff and haunted cell
Reverberant with sounds forlorn,
Till far away, o'er rock and fell,
The dismal-quiring notes were borne.

The hills and woods, in tones of grief,
Stood bickering with this voice of woe,
By mountain-cavern, rock, and cliff,
Muttering their doleful murmurs low.

And as I lingered still to hear
The burden of this boding cry,
A route of urchins did appear,
Trooping along right warily.

Some point, some peer, like goblins grim,
And beck, and stare, full strange to see,
Like meagre gnomes who heed not him
That spies their mid-day mummery.

Noting at length the downward stare
That fixed each fell, regardless eye,
And fearing thence some fatal snare,
At once I shouted lustily :

“Are ye the howling elves of the wood,
Or burgers of the air?” said I;
“Or troopers of the foaming flood,
Or of the steepy mountains high—

That nightly, as with gloom oppressed,
The twilight heaps her glowing yules,
And far and wide the brindled west
Blazons the deep with fiery gules?

Ye gather, and while darkness broods
On sands and shores in many a scout,
Your marsh-careering files are seen,
With elfins grim and goblins stout?

Or are ye of the viewless clan,
That shout across each woody hollow,
And hover where the rout of Pan
The Summer's leafy trail doth follow?

Ye wand'ring imps and demons all,
That haunt these rural dells by day,
Did ye not hear a doleful call
From out yon leafy borders gray?"

"A fool, a pye, a meddling jay,
A mortal fool, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!" said they;
And Echo answered, "Ha, ha, ha!"

OCCASIONAL.

WHAT availeth it thus for to write,
And weekly for to indite—
For to sit by the fire, and to muse,
And to put on poetical shoes,
And out of all measure to run,
For to tell of the things that are done,
Of the gins and the traps that we spring,
Or to search other bait for to bring,
Or the wit of the schools to parade,
In this philosophical shade?

I should rather, methinks, for to be,
In a class of the *a b c*.

What availeth it here for to come,
For to stand by the stove, and be dumb;
Or to sit with your head in a fog,
Like vermin that croak on a log;
Or a toad, as astrologers think,
That laps lightning at every wink,
But never was known for to shed
The carbuncle hid in his head;

Or to let * * * * come in,
For to nettle your sides with a pin?
I should rather, methinks, for to flee,
Like the ox that was stung by the bee.

What availeth it thus for to cavil,
To puzzle the chair to unravel
The snarl that yourselves have got into,
And then, as if Congress you'd been to,
To prate about parliament rules,
That you know not from three-legged stools;
Or striving each other to trammel,
To look as you'd swallow a camel;
Or under the wing of the flea,
For to find out the bag of the bee?
I should rather, methinks, for to try,
For to pass through the needle's eye.

How saucy it is for to write,
And weekly for to indite;
For to sit by the grate, and to summon
The rout of the nine to a woman;
In frolicsome rime for to patter,
And con the elect by the letter:
To make every line for to cater
A word to each longing spectator:

Or to rhyme about tadpoles and vermin,
To keep all the ladies a squirming?

I should rather, methinks, for to flee,
And to sit on Apollo's knee.

What availeth it also for me,
For to sit and to write in this key;
If these verses, you think, will not sell,
Why, then, I'll no longer propel,
But under Apollo's left wing,
Shall a harlequin stand for a king;
Or Phœbus, in garb of a fool,
Sit down on a tub or a stool?
Sure if what I have said is not so,
Or if other the truth you can show,
I'll subscribe myself truly at once—
“Dionysius Domini Dunce.”

LINES.

'Twas when the winds were shrill,
The rain down-pouring,
I heard a sound of wail
Amid the roaring.
Upon the streaming blast
A voice was uttered,
Which, when the rain was passed,
The low winds muttered :

“ Where, where is that dim isle,
Beyond life's river,
Where youth no more shall toil
In life's endeavor ;
Where love's bright star beams now,
And never waineth,
And friendship's like the glue
That still remaineth ?”

Thus, when the winds were shrill,
The rain down-pouring,
I heard a sound of wail
Amid the roaring.
Upon the streaming blast,
A voice was uttered,
Which, when the rain was passed,
The low winds muttered.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

ROSABEL ROY.

FAIR Rosabel Roy, in the woodlands alone,
Had tarried till night-fall a tempest to shun.
Lord Roland, a-fowling, he shot in the dark ;
But Rosabel Roy was his aim and his mark.

She saw not her true love, she heard not his tread,
But still to the tempest she listened with dread,
For all yesternight she had dreamed of her bier,
And the wail of the night-wind fell doleful and drear.

Oh ! fair was her bosom, but dark was the stain,
And pale grew her cheek as she sank on the plain :
When thus the night-breezes she burdened with moan,
And sighed her farewell to the woodlands alone.

“ Farewell to the hazel-hursts hanging with dew,
The hills and the headlands that fade on my view !
Farewell to the blast that sighs mournful and shrill !
The highlands, the highlands, forever farewell ! ”

Thus gently her parting breath faded in night,
As sank into shadow her eye's closing light ;
A kirtle of crimson her death-shroud shall be,
For Rosabel Roy from the tempest is free.

Why hastens Lord Roland—what sigh hid he hear ?
What shriek from the tempest smote far on his ear ?
“ 'Tis the moan of the west wind, the sigh of the gale,
As it ushers the twilight all ghostly and pale.”

Thus doubtful he tarries, till wide on the blast
Fell a faint flitting sigh, and her spirit had passed ;
When he came to the grass-turf, all washen with gore ;
But her eye it was closed, and she spoke never more.

As he gazed on her features in sorrow, he said,
I must bear thee away from thy chill, gory bed :
Nor death-damp shalt seize thee, no mildew shall light
On the snow of thy bosom, oh ! maiden, to-night.

But the pied blooms of summer their fragrance shall
shed
On the light winds that languish, and sigh o'er the
dead ;
And this heart, freed from sorrow, shall mingle its
clay
With the dust that was thine, love, in life's fleeting day.

Thus he bends o'er the still form and motionless brow
Of the death-stricken maid, but she heeds him not now.
Long, long in his dreams will he sigh o'er that scene,
For sad is the heart of Lord Roland, I ween.

But hark ! his shrill clarion is heard through the glades,
Till it startles the gloom of the mid-forest shades ;
And long ere the tardy hours usher the morn,
'Neath his turrets of white the dead maiden was borne.

Now wide o'er the moorland the mournful chimes fall.
And the knights and the heralds bear gently her pall ;
But the brave Lord of Roland, ah ! what shall avail,
Since the palm that was plighted bears death in its
pale !

When the bittern looks down from his rock in the fen,
And the owl, and the turtle, are heard in the glen,
O then, through the vale where the night breezes moan,
By the fireflies lighted, he wanders alone.

Why list ye the winds for a sigh that is o'er ?
Why greet them that slumber, ere sleep is no more ?
Why beckon the omens that death shall unfold,
To follow the dead-lights that gleam on the wold ?

In the woodlands at night-fall, beware how ye tread,
For the fair Rosabel has appeared from the dead ;

When the glow-worm is seen, and the dews on the
grass,
She comes in her death-shroud, and shrieks as ye
pass.

And oft at the twilight ye'll hear her complain,
As when from her bosom the life-blood did drain ;
When sadly the night-breeze she burdened with moan,
And sighed her farewell to the woodlands alone.

“ Farewell to the hazel-hursts hanging with dew,
The hills and the headlands that fade on my view !
Farewell to the blast that sighs mournful and shrill—
The highlands, the highlands, forever farewell ! ”

SONG.

WOODMAN, if you meet my love,
Through the leafy wilds above,
Say, I tarry late and lone,
Where the starry gills are strown—
Sadder than the gouds that grow
By the crystal wells below.
Woodman, if you meet him, say—
By the running brooks I stray ;
Clad in weeds of weeping rue,
Vexed with sighs and sorrows new.

Tell him, here the sweetbriars clamber,
At the fountain's dusk and amber,
Where the tiny elves entwine
Slender-wrested jessamine,
And the flowers of buoyant keel
On the dancing ripple's reel.

Woodman, if you meet him, say—
By the running brooks I stray ;
Clad in weeds of weeping rue,
Vexed with sighs and sorrows new.

You shall mark him, as he goes,
By his bonnet and his hose,
Silken-threaded; note him well;
Shapely are his shoon of fell,
And the buckle at his knee,
Done with boss of silver free.

Woodman, if you meet him, say—
By the running brooks I stray;
Clad in weeds of weeping rue,
Vexed with sighs and sorrows new.

Fleeter than the roe he races
Through the windy woodland chases;
Jubilant his bridle-bells
As the linnet of the dells,
When the clamor of his horn
Wakes the drowsy-lidded morn.

Woodman, if you meet him, say—
By the running brooks I stray;
Clad in weeds of weeping rue,
Vexed with sighs and sorrows new.

MARY OF GLENAURA.

THE wild flowers weep by dale and down :
The sighing winds are sorry ;
The seas lift up their voice of moan,
With hollow shouts and dirges lone,
For Mary of Glenaura.

Ah ! never more those ringlets bright
The breath of morn shall sever ;
The mist of death that shrouds her sight,
Upon each rayless orb must light,
Forever and forever.

No more her strains with dying fall
Shall fill Night's haunted chamber,
Like sad Athena's bird of thrall,
When darkness wraps in dusky pall
The day's expiring ember.

That joyous smile, that glance of light,
The heavens above did lend her ;
Tho' sealed in shadow from my sight,
And dimmed in death's oblivious night—
Ah ! long must I remember.

The snow-white rose, with plighted stem,
Lies scentless on her bosom ;
In death the sweetest, rarest gem,
For innocence a diadem,
And sad, sepulchral blossom.

The wild flowers weep by dale and down ;
• The sighing winds are sorry ;
The seas lift up their voice of moan,
With hollow shouts and dirges lone,
For Mary of Glenaura.

THE SAILOR'S RETURN.

As on the osiered beach I strayed,
By many a gleaming fallow,
Through briony shade and woody glade.
Where twisted gads have silken braid,
And cawing rooks are callow—

Methought I heard a plaintive sigh
Come on the eve so stilly,
As wafted from the woodlands nigh,
Or o'er the waters chilly.

This oft-repeated sound I traced
Along that margin hoary,
To where the restless tide embraced
A wave-worn promontory.

There, high on Neptune's grassy quay,
Where twilight gleams were fading,
A lovely maid in anguish lay,
The ruthless seas upbraiding.

She wore a signet on her brow,
And on her breast a token
Of true love's plight and friendship's vow—
The seals of faith unbroken.

I asked her what her grief might be—
What fate had caused her weeping ?
She said, " My love is drowned at sea,
And in the depths is sleeping.

The angry waves of ocean roar
Above his oozy pillow ;
His white sail I shall see no more ;
He sleeps beneath the billow.

Where'er the weltering ripples run,
They whisper not his story,
Or what the boisterous deep has done
Upon his visage gory.

In dreams I heard the wild waves roar,
With fearful, far commotion,
And saw his light sail from the shore
Sweep o'er the troubled ocean.

Methought I stretched my hand to save,
When far the billows bore him ;
Down, down he sunk beneath the wave :
The howling deep closed o'er him.

The storms, relenting, made their moan ;
The clouds fell drops of anguish ;
The sea-maids heard his dying groan,
And on their wind-harps languish.

I hear their sad eolians all,
And see their pale forms sweeping,
And stooping where the ocean pall
His precious dust is keeping.

Then here will I incline my ear,
For here the night-winds borrow
The dirgeful sound, and here, O here
I'll join their wail of sorrow."

" Nor winds nor waves your true love keep,
Nor storms of ocean bind him,
Nor where the falling surges sweep
Shall landsman ever find him.

His ship is lying at the quay
Where foreign sails are mooring,
And busy fleets at anchor stay,
Their merchandise procuring."

She raised her drooping head, and sighed,
Which left her brow unshaded,
That with the spotless lilies vied,
Amid her dark hair braided.

I looked into her mournful eyes ;
 She started with emotion,
And murmured with a vague surprise,
 And gazed upon the ocean,

As o'er the waters fleet and far,
 A sail she did discover ;
“ It comes,” she cried ; “ my light, my star : ”
 And clasped her trembling lover.

And now Love's promised joys we prove,
 Each tender thought renewing,
And where his purple pennons move,
 Our bark is close pursuing.

SONG.

I've been where the bright waters linger,
I've been where the broom-sedges grow ;
I've treasured my charms for my dear lover's arms.
Farewell !—if he's gone, let him go.

O why should fond lovers thus weary,
Or sigh for the joys they forego—
Why utter again the false vows that are vain,
On others their smiles to bestow ?

Where the olive takes root it will flourish ;
The jessamine blooms where it grows ;
But Fancy will fly with the glance of an eye,
And Love follows wherever he goes.

What though I am fair and forsaken ?
There's many a maiden served so ;
Then I'll sort not with care, but be blithe as the air.
Nor pluck the black thorn for the sloe.

I've been where the bright waters linger,
I've been where the broom-sedges grow ;
I've treasured my charms for my dear lover's arms.
Farewell !—if he's gone, let him go.

SONG OF THE MORNING.

I'VE severed my brumal garments wan,
To hasten the Night's dull dragons on,
And usher the wild winds, whether it be
Over the mountains or over the sea.

When the blackcock blows his clarion shrill,
To startle the depths of the midnight still,
I gather my beams in a swathing cloud,
And follow the wake of the tempest loud.

I come by the route of Odin rare—
I follow the day-star to his lair,
And herald the murmuring winds that sweep
The wild Æolian of the deep.

From odorous cups of scarlet brim
I water my fiery coursers trim,
That on Hesperian hills have trod,
With glimmering hoofs for the desert shod.

I sound the deep with golden plumb—
I challenge the songs of the sea-maids dumb.
And ever my showery locks I twine,
To traverse the weft of the darkness fine.

With the changeful round of the rolling year
I shift my track to the turning sphere,
And usher the wild winds, whether it be
Over the mountains or over the sea.

SONG OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

SAILING down the mighty river,
Gliding onward like a dream,
Past the white mounds of the beaver,
In the lonely lunar beam ;
Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the Mississippi stream.

By the laden winds that fan us
O'er the water's dusky sheen,
From the populous savannas,
And the rocky shores between :
Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds,
Glide we onward with the stream.

On these deep and tranquil waters,
In our hammocks oft we've been,
Dreaming of the dark-eyed daughters
Of the Sioux' silent queen ;

Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the Mississippi stream.

Sweet Winona, forest Miarden,
Art thou sleeping, dost thou dream
Of the fleet sails that are laden
With Lucina's pallid beam?
Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the lonely valley stream.

Yes, the slumberous tide doth carry
Fleet communings of our dreams,
And with thee again I tarry
By the watch-fires fading gleams;
Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the wide majestic stream.

Thus I seek thee, beauteous maiden,
Dwelling northward in thy bowers,
When thy dewy locks are laden
With the freshness of the flowers;

Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the wondrous valley stream.

But when day with golden finger,
In the dawn's gray dial seen,
Points us to the hours that linger,
Onward with the tide we lean ;
Over marches, over miles,
By the forests and the isles,
By the waters and the wilds
Of the silent valley stream.

COLD BLEW THE WINDS, &c.

COLD blew the winds my babe to chill,
Sad was my heart when he was still;
That weary night, that grievful morn—
Ah! would my babe had ne'er been born!

O shall I see my boy again
Beyond the grave where he is lain!
O shall I clasp him to my soul
Beyond life's bourn and earthly goal!

That gladsome voice is hushed and o'er,
Those eyes shall turn on me no more;
Farewell, my little floweret gay,
Thy smiles have long since passed away.

Cold blew the winds my babe to chill,
Sad was my heart when we was still;
That weary night, that grievful morn—
Ah! would my babe had ne'er been born!

THE KNIGHT OF CASTLE-WAME.

“ WHY stands a knight in gleaming mail
Beneath yon marble terrace pale ?”

 The moonbeams shower
 On cross and tower,
And many a tile below,
And the night-winds around each turret blow.

Count Oloff wakes from slumbers deep :

“ What keeps my daughter from her sleep—

 To leave her rest,
 Like thing unblest,
And gaze on sights below ?”
She says, “ Hark, sire, how the night-winds blow !”

At length she sleeps, and in her dreams,

Her dim-presented fancy teems,

 With visions rare,
 Of knights that dare
All danger to oppose,
And that conquer with din of deadly blows.

'Tis now the third watch of the night ;
She hears the sound of footsteps light :
 Three moons ago,
 To meet the foe,
He bade his love adieu :
Does he come now to breathe his vows anew ?

As he was crossing through the hall,
Down came the screen with heavy fall ;
 Count Oloff stirred,
 And waking, cried
“ What noise is that below ? ”
She says, “ Hark, sire, how the night-winds blow ! ”

Now comes she to the wide hall stair,
To see if aught is stirring there.
 There stands a knight,
 In armor bright,
That whispers oft her name.
She says, “ Save thee, Sir Hugh of Castle-Wame ! ”

She's mounted on a charger fleet—
Be sure it was a bridal meet ;
 For Fame hath said,
 “ This true knight's blade
Is foil for any foe ;
And of glory doth more than titles show.”

Now, Oloff's towers, for woe or weal,
Ring out once more their merry peal ;
 By grace divine,
 That this new line,
Thus high in pedigree,
Bear new honors to their posterity.

PASTORALS.



PASTORALS.

WHEN THE SULTRY NOON IS OVER.

WHEN the sultry noon is over,
And the blackbird whistles shrill,
Let us stray among the clover,
And the white wheat on the hill :

With the flying rack above us,
And the fleeting shades below,
Where the night-hawk dips and hovers,
And the skimming swallows go ;

Where the bleating flocks that swelter,
On the swelling downs are seen,
And the lowing herds that shelter
In the quiet vales between.

And we'll mark along the valley
How the passing moments glide,
By the creeping shades that tally
To the sun-light's ebbing tide.

And we'll list, my charming maiden,
Ere the night-winds are at play,
While their dewy wings are laden
With the twilight's golden ray—

To the day-fly's drowsy whistle,
And the humming of the bee,
O'er the crimson-tufted thistle,
And the hare-bell on the lea ;

And the owlet darkly winging
Through the forest-hidden glooms,
And the distant, wary springing
Of the bittern from the brooms.

Not a floating sound or whisper,
From the rustle of a wing
To the cricket's tiny vesper,
But its melody shall bring.

DUET.

CORAN.

LIE still, my dear Cora,
And hear the rain beat ;
Its a cold, stormy morning,
With snow and with sleet ;
The valleys are flooded
By holt and by haugh,
The sheep-cots are sheltered
With thatches of straw.

CORA.

O no, silly Coran,
There's no such a thing ;
The bees are abroad,
And I hear the lark sing ;
Above my bower-window
The sparrow chirps clear,
The swallow's high note
And the linnet I hear.

CORAN.

I hear not the lark
With his carol on high,

For he stoops to the meads
When the storms veil the sky ;
The lay of the linnæet
I hear not at all ;
Thy ewes will not stir, love,
Nor answer thy call.

CORA.

My ewes are astir, love,
And crowd to the bar
To scent the soft breezes
That blow from afar ;
The gray dawn is streaming
O'er all the deep sky,
And dim on the darkness
The silken threads lie.

CORAN.

O no, dearest Cora,
I hear the winds rave,
And Morn veils her bosom
Their fury to brave ;
But the Storm-King has cast
A white glove at her feet,
To challenge her tears,
While the rude tempests beat.

CORA.

No, no, silly Coran,
There's no such a thing,
Save the winds in the pine-tops,
That rustle and sing;
Bright Phœbus makes golden
Yon summits of gray,
The day is a-dawning,
And we must away.

HARK, THE LONELY NIGHT-BIRD SINGS.

HARK ! the lonely night-bird sings,
And the lark so blithely waking
Hails the morn with dewy wings,
On the night and darkness breaking ;
O'er the meadow, up the bay,
Down the valley, through the heather :
Haste thee, Lola, ere the day—
Let us herd our ewes together.

Briskly o'er the scented lawn
Comes the sound of stirring pinions,
'Tis the rustle of the dawn,
Ushered with her posting minions ;
O'er the meadow, up the bay,
Down the valley, through the heather :
Haste thee, Lola, ere the day—
Let us herd our ewes together.

DUET.

FIRST VOICE.

WHAT is briefer than the gleam
Of flashing light when thunders roll?
What is darker than the stream
Of the ocean's endless goal?

SECOND VOICE.

Youth is briefer than the gleam
Of flashing light when thunders roll:
Life is darker than the stream
Of the ocean's endless goal.

FIRST VOICE.

What is louder than the horn
To rouse the slumberer from his dreams?
What is brighter than the morn
That o'er the stormy azure streams?

SECOND VOICE.

Death is louder than the horn
To rouse the slumberer from his dreams:
Hope is brighter than the morn
That o'er the stormy azure streams.

SWEET HELEN VANE.

SWEET Helen Vane, that glance forbear,
Nor still those smiles of promise wear ;
Must thy soft lip and love-lit eye,
With faithless wiles my bosom try ?

Ah ! Many a night hath gloomed and set
Since last by moonlight we were met,
And many a vow, since blown to air,
Thy perjured lips have whispered there.

With thee I've wandered to and fro
Along the reedy banks below,
While Echo shrilled our lay of love
Around the steepy cliffs above.

Yet fare thee well, my Helen dear,
Thy image still is burning here ;
Here still Love's fatal brand must lie,
Unquenched with tears that never dry.

SHALL I TELL THEE THE SECRET.

SHALL I tell thee the secret,
 My love, my dove,
That the stars are all keeping,
 My dear?
Then if thou canst read,
 Of its counsel take heed,
And this hour you shall surely hear.

Though the night-birds are shouting,
 My love, my dove,
And the winds sigh to startle,
 My dear,
In love's plighted mail,
Did true heart never fail,
So methinks there is naught to fear.

Then come to the window,
 My love, my dove,
And in at the lattice,
 My dear;
For the night-winds blow shrill,
And my old father lies still,
And methinks that he cannot hear.







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